

Superintendent's Introduction
Rebecca McFall, Ed.D., Superintendent

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Lincoln Public Schools seek to unite our communities in challenging and equipping our students to acquire essential skills and knowledge, think creatively and independently, exhibit academic excellence, appreciate and respect diversity, demonstrate creativity, value reflection, work hard and play fair.

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**CORE VALUES OF THE LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Excellence and Innovation in Teaching and Learning  
Respect for Every Individual  
Collaboration and Community*

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TOWN OF LINCOLN'S VISION STATEMENT

Lincoln is a town that cherishes its rural, agricultural character, its small town heritage, its open space, and its historical legacy. The Town is committed to:

- ❖ *Achieving a balance between preserving these values while making reasonable provision for citizen's safety and convenience;*
- ❖ *Fostering economic, racial, ethnic and age diversity among its citizenry through its educational, housing, and other public policy;*
- ❖ *Excellence in its public educational system; and*
- ❖ *The Town Meeting form of government and the traditions of civic leadership and volunteer public service.*

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The Lincoln Public Schools is committed to achieving its mission and fulfilling the Town's vision. The Core Values of the school district provide a foundation that guides our programmatic decisions. The aim of the school district is to provide an educational experience that meets the varied needs of our students as they develop content knowledge, skills, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century core competencies of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. In addition, the Lincoln Public School District places a high value on developing the whole child by developing the academic, social, emotional and physical attributes of every child.

## *The State of the School District*

The Lincoln Public Schools student population is comprised of children from three communities. These three communities include Lincoln resident students, children who reside on Hanscom Air Force Base and students who reside in Boston and attend the Lincoln School via the METCO Program. Additionally, some of our faculty members choose to have their children attend the Lincoln School. This is a strong indicator that our district delivers a high-quality educational program that meets the individual needs of its students.

The district provides educational services to students beginning at age 2 years, 9 months when they enroll in the Lincoln Public Schools Preschool and continues through eighth grade. The student population is diverse. Students who attend the Hanscom schools have often had broad experiences gained from living in different states and other countries. While our Hanscom students gain life experiences from living in a variety of places around the world, the many changes in residence sometimes results in learning gaps or specific challenges as we work to integrate them into our schools with the expectation of meeting local and state educational standards. Students may also arrive with strong educational experiences that challenge our district to provide advanced learning opportunities.

Students who attend the Lincoln School are a reflection of the diverse community of Lincoln with the addition of up to ninety-one students who participate in METCO. The rich diversity of the student body supports the Town's core value of fostering racial and ethnic diversity. We continue to strive to develop our cultural competence and understanding of the backgrounds of each of our students. The METCO program provides an opportunity for Lincoln resident students and Boston resident students to develop relationships with peers from varied cultural and racial backgrounds.

The district has a commitment to educating its students in inclusive settings. This commitment begins when children enroll in preschool and participate in an integrated setting where children with special needs are educated along with typically-developing peers. This commitment continues through each of the grades where we strive to educate students in the least restrictive environment and, whenever possible, in the general education classroom. As a result, our staffing levels are high and class sizes are relatively small. Teachers are well trained and benefit from a rich professional development program. All of the elementary grade classrooms, preschool through grade 5, have the support of instructional assistants. Special education tutors are used preschool through grade eight to provide the appropriate level of support to the students and teachers. The district maintains a complete roster of highly trained related service providers (occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, social workers and school psychologists, etc.) and special education teachers (foreign language, literacy and math specialists, art, music, wellness, engineering and educational technologists) who enrich each student's educational experience and teach important subject matter to ensure that every student receives a comprehensive education and the individualized support they need in order to access the educational program.

The Lincoln Public Schools strive to ensure that every student makes appropriate progress and growth and performs at a high level. This performance is often measured by state testing such as MCAS and the district's Progress and Performance Indicator (PPI) that is based on student growth. In the Lincoln Public Schools, progress is also measured using local assessments and common assessments aligned with the district's learning standards.

Over the past several years the district has made strong positive strides in identifying and articulating its standards-based curriculum and is working to refine its use of common assessments in all subjects at nearly every grade. In the coming years, we will continue to develop our ability to assess student learning and progress. The Massachusetts Educator Evaluation System provides a structure for ensuring that the district remains focused on student learning. This focus will require us to refine our measures of student learning and growth as well as our facility to use data to inform the work of the district. The Lincoln Public Schools are in very good standing with regard to moving forward with this work. The development of standards-based curriculum and reporting along with a well developed program scope, preschool through grade eight, has the district on a path of continued progress and refinement of practice.

### **District Strategic Plan**

The work of the district is outlined in our Strategic Plan and On-going Priorities. Strategic Priorities for the 2015 – 2016 school year, approved by the School Committee and used in developing the Preliminary Budget, are presented below. The School Committee in collaboration with the district administrative team identified three of the eight Strategic Priorities that will receive highest priority attention in the 2015 – 2016 school year and these will likely remain Key Priorities for the 2016 – 2017 school year. These highest priority Strategic Priorities are indicated in bold type.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- **Educator Growth:** Educators demonstrate continual growth and professional collaboration built on a shared vision of effective teaching
- **Curriculum and Instruction:** Curriculum is engaging, provides appropriate cognitive demand, and supports the academic, creative, social, and emotional development of all students
- **Instruction:** Instruction is student centered and focused on the engagement, achievement, and development of all learners
- **Assessment and Data:** Assessments and data are used in purposeful, meaningful ways to effectively promote and monitor growth

### **Strategic Priorities**

#### Educator Growth

- **Develop expertise in team-based collaborative practices**
- **Develop instructional coaching capacity, for teachers and administrators, across the district**

### Curriculum

- **Support and guide educator development of instructional units that engage students and provide appropriate levels of cognitive demand and differentiation**
- Continue refining curriculum to align with state and district standards in science, ELA, math, and digital literacy and computer science

### Instruction

- **Develop instructional practices and models for differentiating instruction to meet the individual needs of all students**
- Provide educators and administrators with professional development that focuses on content area knowledge and teaching strategies that address the 5 Key Questions for Learning

### Assessment and Data

- Determine the primary data collection and analysis needs of the district and select and implement a data management system and other tools that allow faculty and administrators to utilize data to inform instruction and programmatic decisions, and assess the effectiveness of our practices
- Support educator use of data to monitor student growth and inform instruction

### *Budget Overview and Structure of the Preliminary Budget*

The development of the FY17 Preliminary Budget takes into consideration the current fiscal climate of the state of Massachusetts and the Town of Lincoln. In addition, the school administration is cognizant of our role, as stewards of the Town of Lincoln and its resources, to ensure that school funding is utilized in a purposeful and responsible manner. We are highly sensitive to the need to develop a budget that meets the needs of Lincoln Public School students while staying within the guidelines provided by the Lincoln Finance Committee. This is especially true within the context of a possible Lincoln School building project.

The FY17 Preliminary Budget was developed using the District Strategic Plan and the FY17 Budget Guidelines approved by the School Committee. For FY17, the Lincoln Finance Committee's budget guideline of 2.5% growth allows us to provide a level service budget with projected enrollment and population (i.e. ELL, Special Education) driven increases for the Lincoln budget. In addition, we have included improvement initiatives to address identified needs aligned with the District Strategic Plan and Core Values. Providing a level service Hanscom budget using the 2.5% guideline continues to present a gap between the funds provided by the Department of Defense contract and the funds needed to maintain current services.

Improvement initiatives have been included in the Preliminary Budget to address our Strategic Priorities, budget guidelines, and state mandated requirements, in particular, alignment of the science curriculum to the new state standards, and recommendations from the Walker report on Hanscom student services.

In the pages that follow you will find sections from the Administrator for Business and Finance that detail projected revenue and expenditures as well as analysis of certain key budget drivers. Also included is information on staffing levels and enrollment. You will also find sections presented by each of the district's program administrators and school principals. These sections provide a narrative overview of initiatives and activities currently underway and projected into next year. Modest but important improvement initiatives to ensure that we provide programming and staffing to meet the educational needs of our students may be included. In most cases initiatives will be applied district-wide. In some cases program proposals are customized to the needs of a particular school.

A series of adjustments are already built into the base budget. These are based on projected enrollment and adjusted staffing levels to reflect these changes, determined after careful review of current enrollment and student needs.

All of the budget recommendations to this point have been guided by the Lincoln Public Schools Core Values, Strategic Plan, and the budget guidelines established by the School Committee.

### *School Committee Budget Guidelines*

#### Goal-focused guidelines

1. The School Committee and the Administration collaboratively develop the District's annual Strategic Priorities [which may be found at <http://www.lincnet.org/Page/3503>], and the budget is the primary way the School Committee and the Town support these Priorities and the District's educational vision. The Administration and School Committee will keep the Priorities central to the budget planning process.
2. Maintain class sizes which benefit student learning and adhere to the School Committee's Policy on Class Size and the requirements of the contract to operate the schools at Hanscom AFB. A review of projected enrollments using the district's cohort survival model will be presented with the Preliminary Budget, along with recommendations for changes in numbers of classrooms as required.
3. Ensure that improvement initiatives are aligned with the District's strategic objectives and priorities. Potential improvement initiatives will be presented, along with a discussion of funding required.
4. Maintain sufficient resources to sustain curriculum development initiatives.
5. Maintain the School Committee's commitment to provide high quality professional development and mentoring for new teachers and administrators. The orientation and integration of new faculty into effective teaching teams remains an important consideration, and has been aided by the School Committee's support of the mentor teacher program.

6. Comply with the criteria set forth in the contract to operate Hanscom schools and maintain comparability to the Lincoln program. Several factors will affect development of the Hanscom portion of the budget:
  - a. Careful consideration of this guideline may be required in light of the changing enrollment trend at the Hanscom schools; the housing project was completed in August 2011, and we are still experiencing an impact on enrollment.
  - b. The Department of Defense (DODEA) awarded a contract in February, 2012, so the price for various enrollment bands is known. Pending additional enrollment discussions, the administration recommends setting the Hanscom budget at the Band 3 (550-599 students) price.
  - c. Planning for FY17 should assume that the Hanscom Middle School will operate in the new school facility currently under construction with an anticipated completion in April 2016. Planning will continue for the replacement of the Hanscom Primary School, with construction anticipated to begin at the beginning of FY17.
  - d. Planning will continue for the replacement of the Hanscom Primary School, with contract award anticipated in January 2016 and a construction start at the beginning of FY17. For school year 2016-2017, the Hanscom Primary School will operate in the temporary facility now occupied by the Hanscom Middle School.
  - e. The portion of the Hanscom enrollment with special needs continues to increase.
7. Carefully consider our role as stewards of Town and federal facilities, plan for sensible restorative and preventative maintenance, and consider historical spending patterns and current facilities assessments to develop maintenance budgets. This issue must be considered in light of the facilities projects under discussion at the Lincoln School and planned for the Hanscom schools.

#### Budget process-focused guidelines

1. Include core program costs in the base budget.
2. As appropriate, maintain level services, i.e., this year's program projected at FY16 costs.
3. Develop analysis of FTE allocations for special subject areas and staffing needs for existing programs and deploy resources as necessary, in line with projected enrollments.
4. Review programs which include positions initiated or partially funded by expiring gifts, grants, fees and tuitions, or recently adjusted programs, and examine the financial implications for future costs.

5. Include considerations related to:
  - a. cost of living adjustments for non-bargaining group employees
  - b. recently concluded contract negotiations with the Lincoln Schools Secretarial Association and the AFSCME Council representing the custodians.
  - c. a follow-on contract for bus service for the Lincoln School.
  - d. a follow-on contract for lease of the Hartwell space.
  - e. impact of projected increases in the cost of health benefits directly on the Hanscom budget and indirectly on Town finances
6. Carefully monitor usage of fuel and energy, review historical data and build projections in collaborations with the District's energy vendors and collaborative partners. Incorporate the new long-term energy prices locked in during FY15; the amount required for utilities will likely increase.
8. Apply special revenue funds as agreed to with the Finance Committee.
9. Maintain METCO enrollment at 91 students if possible, but budget for the anticipated enrollment.
10. Project level funding from grants, state aid and revolving accounts, e.g., tuition and fees. Recent experience continues to validate this guideline for the federal grants and some of the state grants, as these fund amounts have remained relatively static.
11. Identify opportunities for savings through both bottom-up and top-down reviews of budget proposals.

### ***Summary***

Please familiarize yourself with the information and proposals presented in the FY 2017 Preliminary Budget. A great deal of information has been provided about our current program and proposed improvement initiatives for the 2016 – 2017 school year. We invite members of the community to join us for discussions with the School Committee and to become informed about the school programs and budget in the coming months.

We would like to express our appreciation to the residents of Lincoln and the Department of Defense for their continued support. The support we receive allows the school district to provide a high-quality, well-rounded educational experience for the students of the Lincoln Public Schools.